

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the telephone conference with Examiner Dong on May 10, 2004, wherein he affirmed that Claims 28 and 30 were allowable as indicated on the face sheet of the Office Action Summary. Examiner Dong indicated that there was a typographical mistake on page 9 of the Office Action.

Applicant has cancelled Claims 31-53 and 55-75 to moot the rejection of those claims.

The Office Action indicated on page 10 that Claim 54 was unpatentable over the *Inoue et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,236,159). In this regard, the Office Action on page 13 stated that applicant had failed to properly claim a peripheral sealing layer with gaps, and without that limitation, the Examiner asserted a broad interpretation of Figure 3 of the *Inoue et al.* reference wherein the heating gas would enter from a bottom left corner and exit from a top right corner to support the rejection of Claim 54.

Claim 54 is now currently amended, and adequately supports applicant's prior argument that the *Inoue et al.* reference would not be capable of teaching or suggesting an equivalent peripheral sealing layer with gaps wherein the heated gas is directed to the sides of the front panel and back panel by the gas circulating unit to direct the heating gas through the gaps on the peripheral sides of the panels and circulate the heating gas through the gaps from the outer regions of the panels to an inner space between the panels and release the heating gas through the gaps. The *Inoue et al.* reference is incapable of showing any such apparatus capable of this particular form of directing heating gas relative to gaps in the periphery of the panels.

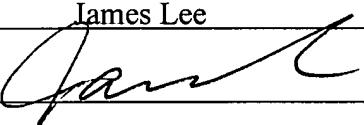
Accordingly, it is believed that Claim 54 is also allowable and that the case is now in condition for allowance.

Applicant recently received on April 6, 2004 an Office Action on its corresponding Japanese Patent Application, and attached hereto are the references cited with English abstracts. A PTO Form 1449 is attached hereto listing the references.

If there are any questions with regards to the prosecution of this matter, the undersigned attorney can be contacted at the listed telephone number.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on June 7, 2004.

By: James Lee



Signature

Dated: June 7, 2004

Very truly yours,

SNELL & WILMER L.L.P.



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